

Hazard Mitigation Plan Maintenance

The Washington State Hazard Mitigation Plan is a living document and will be reviewed, updated and adopted by state officials and submitted to the Federal Emergency Management Agency for approval every three years. The plan will be revised more frequently if conditions under which the plan was developed materially change – through new or revised state policy, a major disaster, or availability of funding, for example – to reflect the new reality of hazard mitigation in Washington State.

This chapter describes the framework through which this plan will be reviewed and revised.

Background

Federal hazard mitigation planning regulations (44 CFR 201.4) require the state plan to be reviewed, revised, and submitted for approval to the Regional Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency every three years. The regulations require a plan maintenance process that includes an established method and schedule for monitoring, evaluating and updating the plan; a system for monitoring implementation of mitigation measures and project closeouts; and a system for reviewing progress on achieving goals as well as activities and projects identified in the Mitigation Strategy [44 CFR 201.4 (c) (5)].

Plan Maintenance Process

The Mitigation Section of the State Emergency Management Division is responsible for developing and maintaining the Washington State Hazard Mitigation Plan. The section's Hazard Mitigation Strategist is the individual responsible for overseeing this work.

Participants in the plan maintenance process include the following:

- Members of the State Hazard Mitigation Advisory Team (see Planning Process, Tab 4, for information on the makeup and involvement of this team in the state plan).
- Representatives of the agencies of Washington State Government that participated in development of the state plan (see Planning Process, Tab 4, for information on the agencies that are part of the state plan).
- Representatives of local jurisdictions whose hazard mitigation plans were used in the development of the state plan.

The state plan review will take place in three ways:

- Annually, for progress made on mitigation actions and projects identified in the Mitigation Strategy of the state plan and in the agency annexes.

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- After each major disaster in Washington State declared by the President, to look for areas where the state plan should be refocused due of the impact of the disaster.
- Every three years, before submission to the Federal Emergency Management Agency for approval.

Annual Progress Review

The purpose of the annual review is to gauge the progress as well as any changed conditions that may affect hazard mitigation planning and implementation in Washington State. The state plan will be revised annually only as necessary to reflect significant policy changes that took place during the preceding year.

Based on FEMA approving the Washington State Hazard Mitigation Plan in the spring of 2004, the annual review of the plan will take place in the spring (April – June) of each year; if approval takes place after this date, the initial annual review will occur approximately 12 months following approval.

Review on progress implementing the actions and projects identified in the state plan's Mitigation Strategy and in state agency annexes will occur every six months. State agencies that are part of the state plan will submit brief progress reports on a semi-annual basis, tentatively March 31 and September 30, but schedule to be determined by the date of the state plan approval. Information from these reports will form the basis for a summary of progress submitted by the Emergency Management Division's Mitigation Section for the annual report of the State Emergency Management Council.

Once a year, the State Hazard Mitigation Advisory Team and the state agencies whose annexes are part of the plan will:

- Review and revise the state plan's Risk Assessment as necessary to ensure its currency. This will include a review and update of hazard profiles and data on vulnerable state facilities as new information becomes available.
- Examine progress on mitigation actions and projects in the state plan's Mitigation Strategy and in agency annexes.
- Identify implementation problems (technical, political, legal, and financial).
- Recommend how to increase involvement by state agencies and local jurisdictions in hazard mitigation.
- Recommend revisions to the Risk Assessment and to the Mitigation Strategy's goals and objectives, projects and timelines only to reflect major changes in policies, priorities, programs, and funding.

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After FEMA approves the state plan, the Emergency Management Division's Mitigation Section will incorporate annexes from additional state agencies joining the state plan on a quarterly basis.

Post-Disaster Review

After each Presidentially declared major disaster in Washington State, the Emergency Management Division's Hazard Mitigation Section will document the effects of the disaster, and convene the State Hazard Mitigation Advisory Team to examine the disaster and, as necessary, develop recommendations to improve resistance to the hazard. This process allows for a review of state plan vis-à-vis the hazard event as well as providing an opportunity to determine whether the Mitigation Strategy requires revision.

In documenting the disaster, the Emergency Management Division's Hazard Mitigation Section may consult representatives from FEMA, appropriate state and local agencies, and private sector partners impacted by the disaster. About six months after the event, the Mitigation Section will prepare and disseminate a report outlining the disaster and its impact, and proposing new or revised recommendations for the state plan's Mitigation Strategy.

Such a post-disaster review may replace an annual review in any year a major disaster event occurs, depending upon severity of the disaster event and on the timing of the survey vis-à-vis the state plan's annual progress review.

Three-Year Plan Review and Revision

Every three years, the Emergency Management Division's Hazard Mitigation Section, will facilitate review and revision of the Washington State Hazard Mitigation Plan prior to its submission to FEMA for approval. The review will begin approximately 12 months before FEMA approval is required. Review and revision will involve the State Hazard Mitigation Advisory Team and state agencies and local jurisdictions whose plans influenced development of the state plan. Additionally, the State Hazard Mitigation Plan will be coordinated with other state plans, as appropriate.

It is the state's intent that the second edition of the plan (c. 2007) addresses both natural and manmade or technological hazards. The state plan's Risk Assessment will incorporate profiles for each of identified the manmade or technological hazards that affect Washington State.

To the extent possible, local multi-jurisdiction hazard mitigation plans completed as of the start of the three-year review and revision cycle (c. spring 2006) will provide the basis for revising the state plan, especially those sections related to hazard identification and risk assessment.

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In the three-year review, the State Hazard Mitigation Advisory Team and state and local planning partners will:

- Examine and revise the Risk Assessment to ensure it remains current. Hazard profiles will incorporate new information and maps of at-risk areas, as available, as well as information from local hazard mitigation plans. Panels of hazard experts will validate the profiles prior to their official revision. State agency risk managers and facility managers will review and update information on state facilities vulnerable to hazards.
- Examine progress on and determine the effectiveness of mitigation actions and projects in the Mitigation Strategy and in agency annexes, and determine how the performance of those projects should influence the state plan's Mitigation Strategy.
- Examine the effectiveness of state-funded, local mitigation projects, and determine how the performance of those projects should influence the Mitigation Strategy.
- Examine implementation of the state plan, identify problems (technical, political, legal, and financial) and develop recommendations to overcome them.
- Recommend ways to increase participation by state agencies and local jurisdictions in hazard mitigation.
- Recommend necessary revisions to the Risk Assessment and to the Mitigation Strategy's goals and action plan to reflect changes in policies, priorities, programs, and funding; as appropriate, recommendations will include the findings of any hazard mitigation reports following disaster events.
- Following review and revision of the state plan, participants will analyze the plan maintenance process, and make changes to improve the process and method used to review the plan and its agency annexes.

Additionally, state agencies will review and revise their annexes to the state plan using the processes they have identified and described in their annexes.

Monitoring Project Implementation, Closeouts

The process used to monitor the implementation of mitigation measures and project closeouts will be similar to the one used to monitor, evaluate and update the plan. The Emergency Management Division's Mitigation Section is responsible for monitoring implementation of projects identified in the state plan and agency annexes. The section's Hazard Mitigation Strategist will work in conjunction with the section's State Hazard Mitigation Program Manager to oversee this work.

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Review on progress implementing the actions and projects identified in the state plan's Mitigation Strategy and in state agency annexes will occur every six months. State agencies that are part of the state plan will submit brief progress reports on a semi-annual basis, tentatively March 31 and September 30, with the schedule to be determined by the date of the state plan approval. The Emergency Management Division's Mitigation Section will track progress of actions and projects identified in the state plan and agency annexes.

Once a year, the State Hazard Mitigation Advisory Team and the state agencies whose annexes are part of the plan will:

- Examine progress on mitigation actions and projects in the state plan's Mitigation Strategy and in agency annexes, using information from progress reports and the project database.
- Identify implementation problems (technical, political, legal, and financial) and, as appropriate, develop recommendations and strategies to overcome them.
- Develop a summary of progress for the annual report of the Governor's Emergency Management Council submitted by the Emergency Management Division's Mitigation Section.

State agencies with projects identified in their annexes that end up funded by the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program, and the Flood Mitigation Assistance Program, will be required to make quarterly reports of progress to the Emergency Management Division's Mitigation Section. Additionally, agencies and local governments receiving hazard mitigation grants are required submit a closeout report at the conclusion of any grant-funded project. Information from these quarterly reports also will be tracked and reviewed on an annual basis, using to the process described above. More information on the process used to monitor progress of mitigation actions funded by hazard mitigation programs listed above can be found in the Hazard Mitigation Administrative Plan, Tab 10.